

**Close Reading Questions for High School Students on
Sefer Shmuel: Perakim Chaf Zayin - Chaf Chet
by Zvi Grumet**

פרק כ"ז

1. Why did דוד think that שאול would not pursue him in גת? Why did he think that the king of גת would welcome him (after all, he did kill גלית who was from גת)?
2. דוד had once before run to אכיש, king of גת. In what are the stays in גת and in what ways are they different?
3. In light of what דוד said in the previous פרק, why is his choice to live in the land of פלשתים surprising? Can you find an explanation to explain his action?
4. The author of שמואל hints to us about whether he thought that דוד's second stay in גת is to be applauded or denounced. What are those hints?
5. Why did דוד not want to remain in גת, preferring צקלג instead?
6. What did דוד do to try to win the confidence of his detractors? Was he successful? Were his actions ethical?

פרק כ"ח

1. At the beginning of this פרק, אכיש wants דוד to join him in the battle against ישראל. Is that because he trusts him or because he doesn't trust him?
2. How do you understand דוד's willingness to join אכיש in a battle against ישראל?
3. Why did 'ה not answer שאול?
4. We are told here that שאול had eliminated the בעלי אוב and the ידעוני. The prohibition against their practices is prominent in פרק יח and ויקרא פרק כ. Given what we already know about שאול, why would he have engaged in a campaign to rid the land of them? When do you think that might have happened?
5. The practice of אוב was explicitly forbidden by the Torah. It involves asking a sorcerer to "raise" someone from the dead. (There is an interesting debate about whether the Torah thinks that this practice "works" or not.) If שאול had worked so hard to eradicate the practice of אוב, why is he now going to a practitioner of אוב?
6. In שאול's context, what do the בעלת אוב and שמואל have in common? What does it say about שאול that in this פרק he turns to both of them?
7. Notice the irony in שאול swearing in 'ה's name (!) that nothing bad will happen to the בעלת אוב. Notice a second irony in שאול trying to hide his identity from a woman he turns to because she knows how to reveal secrets!
8. The בעלת אוב describes שמואל as an איש זקן והוא עטה מעיל חם. This is third time in this ספר that מעיל שמואל is mentioned. Where are the other two?
9. The word עטה is not very common, but it was used three other times in שמואל. What are they?
10. If 'ה refused to respond to שאול through all the conventional (i.e., permitted) ways, why would He allow the בעלת אוב to be successful in bringing the message to him through a forbidden path?

11. Notice the similarities between the message שמואל hears from שאול and the one עלי hears from the איש האלהים. What was שמואל indicate was שאול's double failure?
12. What does the fact that שאול turns to שמואל in his hour of need tell us about the relationship between the two? Which one was the leader?
13. We find out that שאול did not eat in advance of this battle. Where else in ספר שמואל did שאול abstain from food in the face of a battle?
14. In the first part of this story who needs to reassure whom? How does that reverse at the end of the פרק?
15. Notice the similarities between the meal prepared by the בעלית אוב and one prepared by אברהם for his guests (בראשית פרק יט).